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ABSTRACT

Described is Project PRICE (Programing Retarded in Career Education), for educable retarded students from kindergarten through grade 12. Dealt with in three sections are a review of the literature and a discussion of such critical issues as the work ethic vs. the life ethic (concerning the major program emphasis in career education. It is explained that Project PRICE provides a curriculum with emphasis on three areas of competencies: daily living skills (such as managing family finances and caring for personal needs), personal social skills (including achieving self confidence and communicating adequately with others), and occupational guidance and preparation (such as knowing and exploring occupational possibilities and exhibiting appropriate work habits and behavior). (CL)

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CAREER EDUCATION: ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EDUCABLE RETARDED

WORKING PAPER NO. 3

by

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and

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March 1975

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William Hillman, Project Officer
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped

P R E F A C E

The University of Missouri-Columbia was awarded a three-year U.S.O.E. Special Projects Grant on June 1, 1974, from the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. Labeled "Project PRICE" (Programming Retarded in Career Education), the Project is designed to result in a methodology by which school systems can educate personnel to provide more relevant instruction and supportive services to educable mentally retarded students within a Career Education context.

Project PRICE has three major goals:

(1) To develop an inservice/staff development model to educate regular and special education personnel to provide effective Career Education services to EMR students in K-12 programs;

(2) To identify and develop appropriate types of techniques, materials, and experiences so that school personnel can work more effectively with EMR students in a Career Education context; and

(3) To complete and disseminate the resulting inservice/staff development training program so that it can be utilized throughout the country by school systems desiring to adopt the Career Education approach.

Six Mid-western public school systems are participating in the project to obtain practitioner's input and to provide the opportunity to field test the Project's model, techniques, and materials.

This is the third of several working papers to be written and disseminated to professional workers interested in re-directing services and infusing change into educational programs for educable mentally retarded students. This paper attempts to delineate the major issues confronting the field as career education programs emerge and relates the position of Project PRICE to the educational needs of retarded students as we see them.

The authors of this publication are Norman C. Gysbers, Professor of Education, and Lynda West, Assistant Project Director, both in the Department of Counseling and Personnel Services, at this university. Dr. Gysbers, former President of the National Vocational Guidance Association, has directed

numerous career guidance, counseling, and development projects at both the national and state levels. From 1970-1974 he directed a National Career Guidance, Counseling and Placement Project at the University of Missouri funded through the USOE's Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education. Miss West, a graduate of this university's Department of Counseling and Personnel Services has had several years experience teaching educable retarded students, teaching adult basic education, and was formerly Assistant Director of Office of Educational Field Experiences at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

We are pleased with the response of the field to our project and its directions. We are extremely appreciative of the support from the USOE's Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, an agency which continually strives to improve the delivery of educational services to our handicapped citizens. We are hopeful that our efforts are leading in this direction and that these working papers are serving as a stimulus toward this end.

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Donn Brolin
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I.

INTRODUCTION

Since the time that career education was established as a priority in education, numerous efforts to conceptualize and implement it have occurred at Federal, State and local levels. Federal efforts have included financial assistance to States and local school districts as well as technical assistance through conferences, workshops, research and demonstration projects. Many States have developed career education position statements and/or guides, held conferences, workshops and have supported local school district career education projects financially. Local school districts across the country have formulated and begun the implementation of career education concepts.

Effort by Federal, State and local educators to conceptualize and implement career education in the schools are being received with mixed reactions, however. Some individuals and groups endorse the concept wholeheartedly while others have taken a "wait-and-see" attitude while still others are somewhat reluctant. These differences of opinion concerning the nature and structure of career education are substantial. They result in part from the different perspectives that individuals and groups have about the growth and development of individuals and their social institutions. These differences form the basis for a number of critical issues in career education which must be resolved if its full potential is to be realized.

The purpose of this paper is first to review briefly what the literature says about career education for the educable retarded and then identify and describe Project PRICE's position on these issues as they relate to the

Project's major goal of better preparing school personnel to teach educable retarded students. Identifying and describing Project PRICE's position on these issues is important because it is the contention of Project staff that within a career education framework, educable retarded students can best attain specific daily living, personal-social and occupational competencies to enable them to more confidently enter the world of work and hopefully find achievement and satisfaction as contributing members of society.

II.

THE NEED FOR CAREER EDUCATION

The May 1973 issue of Exceptional Children, strongly supported the career education movement for the retarded. In that issue Falck (1973) stated that the responsibility of educators is to develop programs to help retarded students learn specific social skills so that employees will want to hire them. Career education, she suggested, is socially oriented. "It gives educators the opportunity to increase a learner's interest in his world by improving the interfacing between the community and the school (p. 660)." In the same issue Grenda (1973) pointed out that because of handicaps, some students are not in a competitive position in our society. Even if they have a specific job skill, they may experience difficulty in employment if they cannot socially adapt to the work environment. Still in the same issue Brown (1973) wrote that the exceptional child is expected to absorb too much. Instead we should zero in on terminal objectives so that special education students are prepared for employment when they leave school. Educators need to concentrate on real life needs, job connected needs, survival needs. Project PRICE divides needs such as these into 3 domains called Daily Living Skills, Personal-Social and Occupational Skills.

Personnel in the Rose F. Kennedy Center for Research in Mental Retardation and Human Development (Summer 1974) expressed their concern for the area of social competence. Relatively little attention or research has focused on social skills, despite the fact that a deficiency in social skills is recognized as a component of mental retardation. Project PRICE recognized such a deficiency and includes a strong emphasis in its in-service endeavors to promote such skills for the retarded.

In a paper on career education for the handicapped Hoyt (n.d.) wrote:

> We have, for far too long, seemed to act as though a handicapped person should be both pleased and grateful for any kind of work society provides. Unlike other persons, we seem to assume that, if a person is handicapped, boredom on a job is impossible. Worse, much of society has seemed to assume that, while most persons should seek work compatible with their interests and aptitudes. Such considerations are not necessary when seeking to find employment for handicapped persons. If any job in the world of paid employment can be found for the handicapped person, we seem far too often to be personally relieved, and surprised when the handicapped person is anything less than effusively grateful.

A review of the literature shows that the key concepts of career education are very similar to those currently being emphasized in special education. Clark (1974) pointed this out when he quoted the Bureau of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, U.S. Office of Education's (1971) goals of career education and suggested that they also are acceptable goals for the education of educable retarded.

1. To make all instructional subject matter more personally relevant through restructuring and focusing it around a career development theme when possible.

2. To provide all persons the guidance, counseling, and instruction needed to (a) develop self-awareness and self-direction, (b) expand occupational awareness and aspirations, (c) develop "appropriate" attitudes about the personal and social significance of work.

3. To assure all persons an opportunity to gain an entry level marketable skill prior to their leaving school if termination is necessary or a desirable option.

4. To prepare all persons completing secondary school with the knowledge and skills necessary to become employed or to pursue more training.

5. To provide placement services for every person in his preparation for a career, whether it be placement assistance in employment or further education.

6. To build into the educational system greater involvement and coordination of all possible resources in the community.

7. To facilitate entry and re-entry, either into the world of work or the educational system, for all persons through a flexible educational system which continually reviews and expands educational and occupational options (P. 3).

As the literature indicates, career education is needed as much for the educable retarded as it is for all individuals in regular educational programs. This goal is strongly supported by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, U.S. Office of Education as evidenced by the fact that the Bureau "provides financial aid to help stimulate the initiation, expansion and improvement of career education programs for the handicapped throughout the nation (Martin, 1973)."

III.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN CAREER EDUCATION

The review of literature clearly indicates that there is substantial support for career education for educable retarded students. At the same time, however, it also is clear that a number of issues have yet to be resolved; issues that emerge from consideration of the purposes, nature and structure of career education. This section of the paper discusses several critical issues in career education and reviews some key differences of opinion concerning its purposes.

Work Ethic vs. Life Ethic

Educators are concerned about what should be the major emphasis of career education. Some say career education should be concerned primarily with the economic aspects of human development while others say it should be concerned with the total self. Individuals who support a view of career education that expresses a need to restore the creditability of the work ethic focus on economic man. They define work as personally meaningful, socially productive and beneficial. The following passage exemplifies this point of view.

> ...the career education movement seeks to define work as productive effort aimed at producing goods or services that will be beneficial to mankind. The connotation of productive and beneficial are equally important in this definition.
>
> It is a concept that pictures work as a prime means of helping all individuals meet their personal, human needs for achievement, for accomplishment. One must feel that he is doing something that is recognized by others as being meaningful to the worker.
>
> It is a concept that recognizes that one person may like his work while another may dislike the work he does, yet neither worker is diminished in the process.
>
> It is a concept that can be expressed in terms of the economic and societal necessity for work, but can be equally well expressed in terms of the psychological necessity for work as a means of enhancing one's self-concept.

> As envisioned by career education, work is a wonderful word that carries a host of positive connotations. Unfortunately, the word is not interpreted in such a way by many persons at the present time. A major portion of the initial career education effort must be directed toward changing the concept of work from one that carries negative connotations to one that is viewed in a positive manner by the vast majority of people (Hoyt, 1973, p. 4).

Other educators see career education as focusing on the total individual, encompassing work within all of the roles, settings and events which comprise a person's life. From this perspective, career means more than occupation.

> ..."Career" is defined as the course by which one develops and lives a responsible and satisfying life. By defining "career" in terms of man's life span, we must include one's roles as learner, producer, citizen, family member, consumer, and social-political being. Throughout a life span, these roles are in a constant state of changing relative importance. At one point, an individual may perceive the role of citizen as his highest priority. At another time, the role of producer may be most important. Although the assignment of permanent preeminence to any one of these roles must be avoided, temporary emphasis on one or another may be justified (Gordon, 1973, p. 59).

Larry Allen, a 1972 Arkansas high school graduate, reiterated this theme when he suggested the need to focus our attention and efforts in education on learning to live as well as learning to make a living.

> ...I hope that when the time comes to follow a Career Education plan in public schools we don't limit the concept implied by the term "Career Education." In the future, the work careers of Americans will constitute only a portion of our daily lives... To lead full, useful lives, on the job and off, we must be prepared to develop ourselves into well-rounded individuals (Allen, 1973, p. 162).

Advocates of this broader view on the total individual believe that while work is a central activity for most people, it cannot be separated from one's total life. Former Secretary of Labor, Willard Wirtz, made this point clear recently when he suggested the need to work toward a life ethic in which work has meaning.

> We are going to have to think about not just a "work ethic" but what life is all about. We should look for a "life ethic" that gives work more meaning. In such an environment productivity will have a much different definition today.

Part of Education or All of Education?

Is career education all of education or is it only part of education? On one side, career education is seen as being part of the total educational process. This perspective is evident in the following definition.

> Career education is preparation for all meaningful and productive activity, at work or at leisure, whether paid or volunteer, as employee and employer, in private business or in the public sector, or in the family (Hoyt, Evans, Mackin and Mangum, 1972, p. 2).

From this perspective, career education involves that portion of the educational process which relates to preparation for work. The proponents of this position recommend substantial changes in present educational processes. They point out that much of education is overly abstract and often unrelated to the world, especially the work world. Young people have little knowledge and understanding of the work world and the possibilities it may have for them. There is a need for education that will provide individuals with experiences and training to succeed occupationally whenever they decide to leave the formal educational process. Career education formulated in this way encompasses vocational-technical education, but also includes other educational curricula which can and should be related to the work world. In this manner aspects of courses such as English, history, science and mathematics are included in the career education concept.

The other position that is taken by a number of educators is that career education <u>is</u> education; that education cannot be divided into segments such as career education, health education and aesthetic education.

> ...Career education is properly synonymous in meaning with education. Or to put it differently, all education, in addition to whatever else it may be, should be career education (McMurrin, 1973, p. 19).

The proponents of this position recommend the need to make substantial changes in present educational processes. In this case, however changes in all aspects of the educational process are recommended; not only in those aspects that relate to the work world. Those who favor the broad view of career education stress the need to relate all of education to all of the roles, settings and events of a person's total life.

For Some Students? For All Students? For What Purpose?

There is concern among some educators that career education is only a new title for vocational-technical education. This concern is expressed in a number of ways. For example, in the Summer 1972 issue of the National Urban League's Education Division Newsletter EPIC, devoted entirely to career education, section subtitles such as "Career Education: A New Name for an Old Game" and "Career Education in the Midwest: Confused with Vocational Education" were used. In a similar way but from a somewhat different perspective, Nash and Ague expressed concern about an over emphasis in career education on the development of marketable skills at the expense of skills for living a life.

> To counteract the current preoccupation with marketable skills typical of many career programs, educators will have to consider the value of skills which may be probing, questioning, non-instrumental and confrontative (Nash and Ague, 1973, p. 377).

Other educators stress the importance of career education for all people at all educational levels from early childhood through the adult years. They feel, however, that some present conceptions must be extended to accomplish this.

> ...focusing on K-12 or even K-14 will inadvertently reinforce the image that Career Education is, after all, the old wine of vocational education in a new bottle...it is imperative to take every precaution to avoid the equation that Career Education equals vocational education. A demonstration that Career Education is for college students would help avoid this (Spradley, 1973, p. 13).

Directly related to the issue of for whom is career education intended is the issue of the purpose of career education. The lines seem to be drawn most sharply between those who advocate a work world orientation with an emphasis on the development of marketable skills, and those who feel career education should stress total life development skills. This difference of opinion is related directly to the scope of career education and whether or not career education is part of education or all of education.

A Final Note

The different perspectives concerning the purposes and conceptualizations of career education presented in this paper are deeply ingrained in the value systems of the various conceptualizers. The potential that the concept has for vitalizing and refocusing education could be lost, however, if these basic differences are not resolved.

IV.

PROJECT PRICE'S POSITION

So far this paper has presented a number of critical issues concerning career education. The next step is to identify and describe Project PRICE's position on these issues as they relate to the education of educable retarded students.

A Life Career Perspective

It is Project PRICE's position that a life ethic or life career perspective of career education comes closest to meeting the total needs of educable retarded individuals. The work ethic perspective with its emphasis on the economic individual is too restrictive by itself because it tends to isolate economic aspects of life from other aspects of life. While Project PRICE staff fully recognize and support the important role that work plays in the lives of retarded students, they also recognize that work cannot be separated from other life roles and settings.

The broad life career view of career education that is endorsed by Project PRICE is readily apparent in the Project's use of Brolin's (1974) proposed secondary-level career education curriculum for the educable retarded. The proposed curriculum as shown in Table 1 organizes 22 competencies into three primary categories--daily living skills, personal-social skills and occupational guidance and preparation. Instruction to develop academic competencies is seen as supportive to skills in these three categories.

A Complete Educational Concept for All Students

Project PRICE's position on the part or all of education issue is that career education for the educable retarded is more than one part of their educational program. It cannot be only a portion of their curriculum; it is

Table 1. CAREER EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES FOR EMR STUDENTS[1]

Curriculum Area and Competency
DAILY LIVING SKILLS
1. Managing Family Finances
2. Selecting, Managing and Maintaining a Home
3. Caring for Personal Needs
4. Raising Children, Family Living
5. Buying and Preparing Food
6. Buying and Caring for Clothing
7. Engaging in Civic Activities
8. Utilizing Recreation and Leisure
9. Getting Around the Community
PERSONAL-SOCIAL SKILLS
10. Achieving Self-Awareness
11. Acquiring Self-Confidence
12. Achieving Socially Responsible Behavior
13. Maintaining Good Interpersonal Skills
14. Achieving Independence
15. Achieving Problem-Solving Skills
16. Communicating Adequately With Others
OCCUPATIONAL GUIDANCE AND PREPARATION
17. Knowing and Exploring Occupational Possibilities
18. Selecting and Planning Occupational Choices
19. Exhibiting Appropriate Work Habits and Behaviors
20. Exhibiting Sufficient Physical and Manual Skills
21. Obtaining a Specific Occupational Skill
22. Seeking, Securing, and Maintaining Employment

[1]Brolin (1974)

their entire curriculum. The career education curriculum being proposed by the Project for educable retarded students underscores this point with its emphasis on daily living skills, personal-social skills and occupational skills, all supported by academic skills. For the educable retarded career education is not simply another name for occupational education. It is instead education that focuses on facilitating the growth and development of the educable retarded for all of the life roles, settings and events which comprise their total lives. In brief, our position on career education for the educable retarded is that it:

- is a complete educational concept encompassing all kinds, types, and levels of education,
- is preparation for all phases of their lives,
- focuses on interpersonal and intrapersonal skills,
- is ongoing from preschool through retirement,
- equips students with saleable skills,
- provides a balance of content and experiential learning,
- emphasizes helping them to plan and make decisions wisely, and
- is a way to personalize their education.

Project PRICE will endeavor to design an inservice training model that will lead to this end.

E P I L O G U E

The results of the field study regarding which types of school personnel can best meet the Career Education needs of EMR students at the secondary grade levels, competencies and experiences needed, and types of materials and information needed for them to effectively understand and work with such students is completed and currently being analyzed. The results of this study will be forthcoming.

The first inservice workshop is scheduled for May 4-7, 1975, at the University of Missouri. This training will focus on 45 trainers from the cooperating schools who will assist Project PRICE staff in conducting field-based inservice workshops at their schools next Fall and Winter. At least six inservice workshops are contemplated for each school next project year.

Working papers published to date are the following:

- Programming Retarded In Career Education
- Career Education Materials for Educable Retarded Students
- Career Education: Its Implications for the Educable Retarded
- Daily Living, Personal-Social, and Occupational Skills Development for Educable Retarded Students

Those contemplated in the future will focus on the following:

- Preparing School Personnel for Accommodating Retarded Students in Career Education Programs: Results of a Study
- An Inservice Training Model for School Personnel in Better Serving the Career Education Needs of Educable Retarded Students

Those contemplated for the next project year are the following:

- School-Based Resources for Educable Retarded Students
- Community-Based Resources for Educable Retarded Students
- Evaluation of Educable Retarded Students' Competencies

During the first project year (June 1, 1974-May 31, 1975), the PRICE staff has worked closely with each cooperating schools liaison person and several university and national advisors. We have identified and gathered related materials, prepared some training materials, and become familiar with much of the work that has been undertaken around the country. Further work in these areas will be continued in addition to the field workshops during the second project year.

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